



Scott Twito
Yellowstone County Attorney
217 N 27 Street
PO Box 35025
Billings, MT 59107
Phone: 406-256-2870
Fax: 406-256-6931

Daniel L. Schwarz
Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney

December 8, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Judicial Nomination of Kevin Peterson

Dear Nominating Committee:

I am writing this letter in support of the appointment of Kevin Peterson as the next District Judge of the Sixteenth Judicial District. Kevin has the right stuff to be fair, impartial and decisive.

Kevin knows both sides of a criminal case. Before he came to the Yellowstone County Attorney's Office, Kevin represented clients of the Yellowstone County Public Defender's Office with a firm resolve to preserve his clients' constitutional rights. He was prompt, knowledgeable and was a worthy opponent on the other side of my criminal prosecutions.

Impressed with his work as a public defender, I later hired Kevin and worked with him in the Yellowstone County Attorney's Office. I have remained friends with him ever since. While Kevin worked in our office, he tried numerous jury trials, presided over sentencing hearings, probation violations and various other criminal matters. Kevin also served in Yellowstone County's Civil Division, working on land use issues, contracts, civil litigation and involuntary commitment hearings. He dealt with all of these matters in a quick, efficient and competent manner.

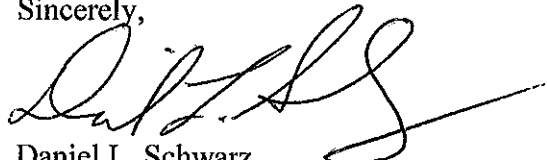
In addition to the myriad of legal matters, Kevin proved to be quite adept technologically. Kevin was at the forefront of designing the use of our case management software, JustWare. He also suggested routinely rotating and updating the computers in the office, which assured that the County's outlay for computer equipment was steady, helping with our budgeting. The rotation also prevented employee downtime in that computers were regularly serviced or replaced before real trouble began. Our office employs this rotation system yet today.

Kevin's experience since his time in our office is just as impressive. He competently represents the State of Montana in water issues as counsel for the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. He holds the honor of being licensed in the United States Supreme Court and represented Montana's interests in the "Powder River Water Litigation" before the country's highest court. He is a licensed patent attorney—indeed, a rare distinction for a rural state like Montana.

Kevin has an agricultural background that will be invaluable to the Sixteenth. I know the importance of being able to understand agricultural issues in that it was my honor to serve from 1984 through 1989 as the Powder River County Attorney. Kevin will be able to seamlessly relate with the issues facing Montana's agricultural community in serving this constituency. He will hit the ground running on some of the issues important to Montana's farmers and ranchers.

Being a District Judge is not an easy job. It takes energy, persistence, intelligence and honesty. These traits fit Kevin Peterson. The Sixteenth Judicial District and the State of Montana will be well served by Kevin. Please consider his appointment to the bench.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan L. Schwarz", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel L. Schwarz
Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney